

Kindergarten Central Registration Policy



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Service Unit	Community Connections & Wellbeing
Directorate:	Strengthening Communities
Review Date:	2026

1. Purpose

This policy outlines Moorabool Shire Council's commitment to providing a transparent and consistent framework for registering a child for funded three-year-old and/or four year-old kindergarten via the Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES).

2. Definitions

CRES	Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme. A single point of entry for Moorabool families to register and enrol their child/ren into funded kindergarten programs.
DE	Department of Education.
Kindergarten provider	The Early Years Manager who operates a funded kindergarten program.
Kindergarten registration form	An online form used to register a place at a funded kindergarten program participating in Council's CRES.
MSC	Moorabool Shire Council.
Preferred kindergarten	A kindergarten that has been nominated by a family through the registration process.
Priority of Access	The priorities referred to and applied when allocating places into the kindergarten program through the CRES.
Registration and Enrolment	Registration is considered the initial application for a child to access Kindergarten through Council. After registration the kindergarten provider will contact families to confirm Enrolment in the kindergarten program.
Standalone/sessional kindergarten	A kindergarten program that operates on set days and hours for 15 hours a week for three year-olds and for up to 30 hours a week for four year-olds (as of 2026).

3. Scope

This policy applies to families who wish to register their children for a CRES registered kindergarten program and all Council employees and third-party contractors that provide or manage kindergarten registration and enrolment services through the Moorabool CRES.

4. Policy

Moorabool Shire Council's CRES Policy works in partnership with CRES participating Kindergarten Providers to oversee the fair and equitable access for children to free kindergarten programs.

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Moorabool Shire Council is responsible for:

- The administrative tasks associated with the processing of registrations through the CRES.
- The administrative tasks associated with the allocation of kindergarten places in line with the eligibility criteria.
- Co-ordinating the promotion of the registration process.
- Ensuring this Policy is implemented and reviewed as appropriate.

Kindergarten providers are responsible for:

- Formally enrolling children into kindergarten programs.
- Providing families with information relating to groups, session times, orientation sessions, any fees and the day-to-day operation of the kindergarten program.
- Notifying Council of the number of children requiring a second-year place (provisionally at the end of round one and formally by the first week of term 4 of the year prior).
- Ensuring they work with families of children who have been recommended for a second year of four year-old kindergarten, to complete the forms required to be submitted to Council by the first week of term 4 year prior to attendance.
- Reminding parents to submit a registration form before round one or round two closing dates.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Submitting a CRES registration form when required with the required supporting documentation by the end of round one the year prior to attendance to be considered in first round offers.
- Contacting Council if registration details need to be amended.
- Contacting the kindergarten provider to gain information regarding session times and other relevant information required in order for the family to make a decision on kindergarten preference.
- Providing Council with information and supporting documentation for children who have additional needs.
- Advising Council of their response to their offer by email.
- Completing enrolment paperwork and providing requested supporting documents to the kindergarten provider by deadlines set out by the kindergarten provider.

5. CRES Eligibility

To be eligible to join the MSC CRES, kindergarten providers must:

- Be a not-for-profit organisation.
- Agree to abide by this CRES policy in full.
- Offer free three and four year-old sessional kindergarten.
- Be based within the Municipality.
- Accept that all registrations to the kindergarten program are to only be processed through the Council's CRES registration process.

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6. Kindergarten Eligibility Criteria

In line with the DE Kindergarten Registration Guidelines, the following children are eligible to register for free three year-old kindergarten in MSC:

- Must be at least 3 years-old on 30 April of the year in which they are enrolled to attend the funded three year-old kindergarten program.
- Enrolled for 15 hours of kindergarten per week.
- Not be enrolled in a funded kindergarten place at another service.

The following children are eligible to register for free four year-old kindergarten in MSC:

- Must be at least 4 years-old on April 30 of the year in which they are enrolled to attend the funded four year-old kindergarten program.
- Enrolled for no less than 15 hours per week and up to 30 hours per week (when available).
- Not be enrolled in a funded kindergarten place at another service.

7. Priority of Access Criteria

In line with the Kindergarten Funding Guidelines (KFG, 2023), children are eligible for priority one access to kindergarten places if they are:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in out-of-home care.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children.
- Asylum seeker and refugee children.
- A child with a disability or developmental delay.
- A child that meets the eligibility criteria for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy.

If more eligible children are seeking a place at a Kindergarten service than there are places available, children are required to be prioritised based on the Priority of Access table (below).

Where multiple children meet the Priority One criteria and there are limited places available, those who meet additional priority of access criteria will be given preference.

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7.1. Priority of Access Table

	Priority of Access Criteria	Process to Verify Needs
Priority One (all of equal priority)	Children who are vulnerable and at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in out-of-home care.	The child is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible for Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) or Access to Early Learning (AEL); and/or • Family, carer or legal guardian identifies the child as known to Child Protection or in out-of-home care; and/or referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection • Child and Family Services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST) • Maternal and Child Health nurse, or • Out-of-Home Care provider
	Children who are of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent.	Families identifying their child as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander on the registration form.
	Children who are asylum seekers/refugees.	Child or family holds a visa or supporting documentation and information, including an ImmiCard, identifying the child and/or parents, carers or legal guardians as a refugee or asylum seeker, and/or Referred as a refugee or asylum seeker by a Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) outreach worker. Exemptions will be considered by the department where a child, their family or guardian does not hold, or is not in the process of applying for a refugee or humanitarian visa but has been impacted by a refugee or asylum seeker experience or an experience similar to a refugee and asylum seeker. This experience could be a recent experience, or an experience which has occurred 20 or more years ago. Services and/or Council can apply for the exemption on behalf of the registrant.

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	<p>Children with additional needs, defined as children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program. - Require a combination of services which are individually planned. - Have an identified specific disability or developmental delay. 	<p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten, or • Approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support package. • Holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, or <p>Referred by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Disability Insurance Scheme • Early Childhood Intervention Services, or • Maternal and Child Health nurse • Preschool Field Officer
	Children attending a 2nd year of 4 year-old kindergarten.	Children identified as eligible to enrol in a second year of four year-old kindergarten.
	Children or parents who hold a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card or proof of multiple birth children (triplets or more).	<p>Verification documents will be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy or photo of Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card • proof of multiple birth children (triplets or more)
Priority Two	Residents of Moorabool Shire or intention of becoming a resident.	<p>Verification documents will be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of living in the municipality or of being a rate payer of Moorabool Shire, or • Contract of Sale or rental document.
Priority Three	<p>Children who have a connection to Moorabool Shire and who meet one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child's parent/guardian is working within Moorabool Shire - The child's parent/guardian is studying within Moorabool Shire 	<p>Registrations are assessed on a case-by-case basis in January of your child's kindergarten year. Verification documents will be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from employer or educational institution
Priority Four	Non-residents of Moorabool Shire who are not eligible for Priority One	Registrations are assessed on a case-by-case basis in January of your child's kindergarten year

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8. Registration

Registration, enrolment and attendance for three and four year-old kindergarten is free.

Registration forms will be accepted from the first Monday in March in the year prior to a child attending a kindergarten program. Registration forms are available via the MSC website. Separate registration forms must be submitted for each individual child. The two steps to registration are:

- Completing the online registration form.
- Attaching supporting documentation to the registration form:
 - For residents, proof of address
 - Non-residents, refer to Priority of Access Three in above table
 - Children who are eligible for Priority of Access One, must provide supporting documentation as listed in the Priority of Access table above

An acknowledgement of registration notification will be sent via system email to notify the registrant that their registration has been received.

The MSC Early Years team can be contacted at earlyyears@moorabool.vic.gov.au or 5366 7100 if there are any challenges in accessing or submitting a registration form.

8.1. Process

Important dates for kindergarten registration will be listed on the MSC website by the second week of February of each year.

Registrations received prior to round one closing date or the previous business day will be processed in the first round and acknowledged via system email. Registrations received after the round one closing date will be processed in the second round of allocations and acknowledged via system email.

Allocation of placements for each three and four year-old group will be made in accordance to the Priority of Access Criteria and the registrant's kindergarten preferences. A ballot system will be used when the number of registrations for a kindergarten outnumbers the number of kindergarten places available.

If a ballot system is required, Priority One eligible registrant's will be allocated a place prior to the ballot allocation unless the number of Priority One registrations exceed the number of places available. In this case, they will be balloted and any Priority One children who do not receive a place will be listed on a waitlist in order of the ballot.

8.2. Responding to Offers

Unless specified, registrants are required to respond to the offer via email to Council within the nominated timeframe as outlined in the offer. Registrants will be required to make one of the following choices:

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- **ACCEPT**
Accept the kindergarten place offered via return email.
- **WAITLIST**
Request to be placed on a waitlist for the registrant's preferred kindergarten until the end of March of the enrolled kindergarten year. Registrants can provisionally accept an offered place while remaining on the waitlist for their preferred kindergarten place. All waitlists will be closed by the end of March of the enrolled kindergarten year.

Waitlists will be maintained by Council and will be allocated in a fair and equitable manner.

If spaces become available at your preferred kindergarten services these will be allocated in the following order:

1. Waitlisted registrants who are Priority One eligible.
 2. Waitlist requests received during the Round One response period (balloted).
 3. Waitlist requests received during Round Two response period (balloted).
 4. All other waitlist requests (balloted).
- **DELAY**
Registrants may delay acceptance of a kindergarten place to the following year. There is only the option to delay attendance at three year-old kindergarten if your child turns three before 30 April in the year you are considering attending kindergarten. Families who choose to delay will not need to re-register for kindergarten for their place the following year.
 - **DECLINE**
Decline the offer and cancel the registration via return email.

8.3. Appeals

Should a registrant have a dispute with the Kindergarten Central Registration Policy or its implementation, they are requested to put this in writing to:

Co-ordinator Early Years and Youth Services, Moorabool Shire Council, PO Box 18, Ballan VIC 3342 or via email to earlyyears@moorabool.vic.gov.au

The dispute will be reviewed by the Co-ordinator Early Years and Youth Services and a formal response will be sent within ten working days of receipt of the letter by Council. If the dispute is not resolved, the matter will be reviewed by the Manager of Community Connections & Wellbeing.

9. Related Legislation

List any related legislation, policy or procedure that is relevant to this document. For example:

- National Quality Framework (ACECQA)
- The Kindergarten Funding Guide 2023 (DE)
- Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Practice Guide 2023 (DE)
- Kindergarten Central Registration Practice Guide (Moorabool Shire Council)

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- Early Childhood Reform Plan 2017
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Best Start, Best Life Reforms (DE)

10. Council Plan Reference

Objectives: A Council that listens and adapts to the needs of our evolving communities.
Context: Align services to meet the needs of the community.
Be recognised for demonstrating a culture of excellence, creativity and inclusiveness.

11. Review

As a minimum, this policy will be reviewed every second year, or as needed.

12. Approval

This policy will come in effect once signed by the CEO.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Derek Madden".

Derek Madden
Chief Executive Officer

10 May 2024